

## Health Facts



### Prolonged sitting damages your spinal health

- **Stress on the discs** between the vertebrae
- **Reduced structure and stability** of the spine
- **Reduced function** of the spine
- Increased **inflammation**, leading to **pain and early**

**degeneration** of the spine [S12, S10]

It's even been shown that after **sitting in a slouched position for as little as 5 minutes** it can be **difficult to reposition the lower spine** in a correct, neutral position [S12]

The extended sitting habits of office workers can result in a 1 in 2 chance of neck pain.<sup>11</sup>

### Prolonged sitting alters the shape and function of your body

- Body **slows down** its **processing of fats**
- **S curve** in back **deteriorates**
- Weight **pressure** on back **increases**
- Leg and backside **muscles weaken** Sitting down for prolonged periods without a break can slow the body's processing of fats, glucose and other substances, which **increases the risk of developing chronic disease – even when you meet recommended physical activity levels** [S1, S18]



### Prolonged sitting increases risks of disease and death



- **Every hour** spent watching television (sitting) increases the risk of death from chronic disease by 11% [S1, S3, S17]
- A recent study in WA found that an office desk job can double your risk of bowel cancer [S7].
- The conclusion reached by a number of studies is that sitting too much can shave a few years off your life [S6, S13, S16]

## How Do I Sit Right?

There's two simple ways you can Sit Right.



**1. Sit less** We can improve our health simply by standing up and moving around more. [S1, S6]

For example the average 'standing' worker (eg. behind a counter) burns about 1,500 calories compared with a desk-bound office worker that might burn 1,000 calories. [S6]

A. Why not **try standing whenever you're on the phone** as a way to break up your sitting time?

B. Consider **introducing 'walking meetings' into your workplace**. Try walking around



the block instead of catching up with small groups in the Boardroom.  
 C. Factor in a little of these two types of activity into your life every day...

| On Your Feet time   | Regular Physical Activity   |
|---|---|
| Short regular breaks from sitting time for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stretching or Standing</li> <li>• Walking around the office</li> <li>• Changing/correcting posture</li> <li>• Jumping or shaking to loosen the body</li> </ul> | Choose activity that's appropriate for you. This might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking or Jogging</li> <li>• Exercise or dance classes</li> <li>• Playing sports</li> </ul> |

Download our free *Sit Right* widget to your desktop, to help prompt you to take regular breaks from sitting.

## 2. Sit Correctly

Follow our Sit Right Checklist to keep your posture correct while you sit.

### Your seat...

- Hips, elbows and knees should be at open angles (slightly more than 90 degrees). [S14]
- Recline slightly to ease lower back pressure. [S15]
- Thighs parallel to floor.
- Ensure feet are flat on floor (or use footrest).
- Sit about one arms-length from the monitor.

### Your monitor...

- Position centre of screen at eye level – tilt the monitor upwards slightly.

### Your mouse/keyboard...

- Keep wrists in neutral position, not bent up or down.
- Only use wrist rests while resting, not when typing.
- Keep alphabetical section of keyboard centred to you.

## SIT RIGHT CHECKLIST

**Your seat...**

- Hips, elbows and knees should be at open angles (slightly more than 90 degrees)<sup>14</sup>
- Recline slightly to ease lower back pressure<sup>15</sup>
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- Keep wrists in neutral position, not bent up or down
- Only use wrist rests while resting, not when typing
- Keep alphabetical section of keyboard centred to you

And take regular breaks!

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